

on the other, and the affiliation of the teachers with it has been promotive of this purpose of good citizenship. That honestly meant objections may be made to such an affiliation is not disputed. That well meaning persons both in the school board and out of it may honestly entertain and act in accordance with such objections is true. It is also true that honest but unsophisticated members may become unconscious tools of the plutocratic ring that has dominated the school board, by raising plausible points of objection in innocent furtherance of an illegitimate crusade. But after all this is said and allowed for, the demonstrable fact remains that the impulse of the present concerted attack upon the Teachers' Federation originates in the same plutocratic sources from which it came when that body, against all the powers of city government and school board and subsidized newspapers that could be influenced, fought the tax dodgers of Chicago for withholding school funds and forced them to disgorge.

Official Contempt for Popular Suffrage

Alderman R. R. McCormick, whom the Republicans have nominated for an important office to be filled at the Illinois election next Fall, should take advantage of the opportunity for writing a letter of acceptance which this nomination offers, to disclaim the sentiments of the reports of a certain speech which he recently made, if they are not really his. No man who holds such sentiments is fit for public office in a democratic community. As reported by the Record-Herald of the 3d of June, in an address of the 2d at the Central Y. M. C. A., Alderman McCormick described organizations for pledging candidates as "lynching leagues," because they intimidate "honest" officeholders by going out "lynching, not with nooses, but with ballots"! He excepted the Municipal Voters' League from this animadversion. That league "is all right," he said, "because it is simply out to knock bad men;" but

such organizations as the Anti-Saloon League, the Firemen's Association, the Liquor Dealers' Association, the Wide Tire Association and the Referendum League, are assumed to be out to "knock" good men. They are so bad, in Mr. McCormick's view, that although "we can condone a vigilance committee for hanging a horsethief," we cannot condone the civic activity of such leagues for threatening a candidate for office that if he will not pledge himself to their views they will "beat him at the polls." Mr. McCormick's idea of popular government seems to be that candidates should be elected to office to do what they think the voters ought to have done and not what the voters themselves want done. This idea is at the bottom apparently of his reported dislike for the Referendum League, which has enabled the voters of Chicago to instruct officials, and which will in good time no doubt enable them to command officials. If Mr. McCormick's speech was unfairly reported, he should take advantage of the present opportunity to disclaim its un-American sentiments; if it was fairly reported, voters of Chicago should take advantage of the approaching opportunity to teach him that the man who regards appeals to popular suffrage for the regulation of official conduct as being in the nature of lynch law, is either too plutocratic or too young to merit the confidence of a democratic community.

A notable specimen of the public official who regards himself as empowered to use his office as he likes regardless of what the people want is Alderman Bennett, who was one of the most serviceable men in the Chicago Council in the promotion of that scheme for perpetuating corporation traction privileges which is known as "the tentative ordinance" (p. 8). Among other things regarding which it now appears that Alderman Bennett had thought himself a plenipotentiary, is the acceptance and

distribution of railroad passes. He is reported by a friendly paper, the Record-Herald, of the 21st, in connection with its exposure of a "get-rich-quick" affair, in this wise:

Names of many prominent Republican politicians have been used either with or without their permission to further the ends of the promoters. It was found that Lobb, who was the central figure of the scheme, traveled about the country on transportation said to have been secured for him by Alderman Frank I. Bennett. The name of the Seventh ward leader appears on a number of communications relating to transportation that have fallen into the hands of the receiver.

Alderman Bennett has made no public denial of this accusation; and accusation it is, for how could he secure railroad passes, for himself or anybody else, if he were not a public official or otherwise in position to serve the railway corporations giving the passes? Do they give passes for the fun of it?

Heroes Without War.

Another hero of peace went bravely to death when Allen Tyler, the engineer of the swift Lake Shore special between Chicago and New York which was wrecked at Mentor, stood by his post in the face of certain death to do all in his power to save his train full of passengers. By desertion, but only by desertion, he might possibly have saved himself. In the face of multiplying examples of courage like this, the theory to which President Roosevelt once tried to give currency, that wars are necessary to cultivate courage, has faded away—to return, let us hope, never again.

THE PARADOX OF THE GOOD.

Cicero in his speeches frequently used as a term of classification the word boni, the good. He meant the word to include the party to which he devoted his eloquence and his life. They were those who sympathized with the time-honored senatorial regime, those who upheld the existing order of things, those who for generations had enjoyed special privileges, together with their dependents and followers.

He, like the sturdy Cato, had

ideals for this party. He believed that the government should be administered with rectitude, as he understood the word rectitude, and that there were limits beyond which the processes of speculation and graft should not go. But in the main the old ways were all right; and in contrast with the restless, uncertain masses, concentrating under Caesar and meditating "new things"—which was the orthodox expression for revolution—in contrast with these, whose policy, so far as it could be understood, was subversive of ancient rights and privileges, the conservatives, who maintained the established order, were the good.

It is interesting to note in passing that Cicero himself was not of the nobility. But he had thrived. He owned not only a handsome residence in the city, but half a dozen country places, some in the mountains and some by the seashore. He was an educated gentleman, fond of literature, a senator in daily and intimate relations with the old families of the ancient regime. Whatever savored of vested rights and eminent respectability had his support, and all who agreed in this support were the good.

As I have intimated, Cicero believed that vested rights carried duties, and that respectability should be really respectable. He believed that wealth was a trust, that position had responsibilities, that a senator should do business in a senatorial way. What he could not see was that the nabobs of his party of the good, by their deft policy of amassing wealth in respectable ways, were the real enemies of the preservation of the constitution which he so eloquently upheld. He could not see—any more than his many likes since his day—that the policy of the good, whereby liberty is preached and private monopoly protected, good government proclaimed and special privilege fostered, is a paradox.

Will the good never learn this old Roman lesson? Will they never learn that they, and not Caesar or the proletariat, are the real enemies of the Republic? Will they never learn that the sanctimonious talk about riches being a trust has been rotten for

two thousand years? Will they never learn, now in our time, after all the lessons of the past, that unless justice be done—unless the means of respectable robbery be removed—there will roll up again a clamor of wrongs, with a clear summons for new things—once more?

J. H. DILLARD.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

JOHNSTOWN.

Johnstown, Pa., June 20.—Much disappointment has followed the victory of democratic Democrats at the February municipal election, which was reported in *The Public* (vol. vii. pp. 743, 755) at the time. Charles Young, the Democratic nominee, was chosen mayor by a majority in excess of 500. The normal Republican majority in the city is about 800. Mr. Young was permitted to formulate his own platform, and he made his race on the franchise issue, specifically pledging himself to submit questions relating to franchises to a referendum vote by means of postal cards. The postal card referendum in fact played a conspicuous and perhaps a determining part in the campaign. It was made prominent and was widely discussed. The vote seemed to be an emphatic indorsement of the referendum principle, and only less emphatically a public protest against the reckless bartering away of franchises.

Soon after his election, but not until some question had been raised regarding what seemed an unnecessary delay, postal cards were mailed by Mayor Young to the voters of the city, submitting the franchise question in its various phases. The exact result of this referendum is yet to be disclosed. Apparently the returns were general, although no effort seems to have been made to get the cards back.

At the first meeting of Councils after the inauguration of the new administration a committee was appointed to act in conjunction with the Mayor and the city engineer for the purpose of conferring with the Johnstown Passenger Railway and the Cambria Steel company in regard to the improvement of Maple avenue, the main thoroughfare between Johnstown and two of its most populous suburbs.

There was no hint in the resolution under which this committee was appointed that a franchise for the double-tracking of the traction line on that street was in contemplation. However, it was suspected that some scheme of this sort was on foot, and an effort was made by reporters to ascertain the real facts. But every effort in this direction proved futile, and it was not until the Mayor and the committee had entered into an agreement with the steel company and the traction company, under which the former was to fill Maple ave-

nue and bring it to grade at the expense of the traction company, the latter under this arrangement to receive a perpetual franchise for a double track line on that street, that it became known outside the committee and the persons immediately concerned that anything of the sort was in contemplation.

The agreement thus secretly negotiated was not read in open Councils. It was said that every one understood its terms, and it was adopted without reading, by a viva voce vote, the Mayor being authorized to sign it and thus bind the contract.

The reporters who tried to obtain a copy of the secret agreement the night of the Council meeting were unsuccessful. The Mayor flatly refused to permit representatives of the press to see the agreement. He stated, in effect, that it was none of the public's business until it had been signed. He put his name to the agreement the next day. Acting under this agreement the steel company and the traction company have proceeded with the work of filling Maple avenue.

Under the laws of Pennsylvania it appears that a franchise can be legally granted only by ordinance. And ordinances must follow a certain prescribed legislative course. After the first reading they must lie over and be printed. But it is held by the city solicitor, who does not seem to have been consulted about this singular proceeding until it had been practically consummated, that the agreement is substantially a contract entered into by the city to deliver a franchise to the street car company in consideration of the filling of Maple avenue. Other lawyers contend that the agreement is not worth the paper it is written on.

The severest criticism of the Mayor is heard on what is charged as his perfidy in abandoning the policy outlined in his pre-election programme. Others denounce the whole procedure as dangerous by reason of the secrecy which attended it and the irregularity that was permitted. It is pointed out that if a secret agreement may be entered into for the bestowal of one franchise, secret agreements may be negotiated under which every street and every privilege in the city may be alienated in perpetuity and without compensation.

The street car company has undertaken to defend the extraordinary course which has been followed, by setting up the claim that under its original ordinance it has the right to double-track Maple avenue. But it is pertinently asked if that be true why it thought it necessary two years ago to introduce an ordinance in Councils granting it the privilege of double-tracking that thoroughfare? Such an ordinance was introduced at the request of the traction company, and it was withdrawn only after it had been amended in one branch so as to require the company to bring Maple avenue to grade, to pave it from